

This is War

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Summary: And then? Then the unimaginable happened. AU deviation from the movie with book elements.

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**\*\*Author's notes:\*\*** first off, this came from Avanna's beautiful analysis ([avannak.tumblr.com \(/\) post \(/\) 60865392649 \(/\)](http://avannak.tumblr.com/post/60865392649) ammyameliajane (-) has (-) anyone (-) ever (-) wondered (-) what) of what might have happened had Hiccup not gotten the idea to go after the boats. Second, y'all should really listen to this song ([youtube dot com \(/\) watch \(?v=\) Zcps2fJKuAI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zcps2fJKuAI)), since it pretty much inspired me to write it this way. Enjoy!

\* \* \*

><p>How long had it been? Five? Six years? Astrid doesn't know but she's lost count. All she knows on how to count it is that she's grown older and the seasons have passed. The freeze, the warm, the freeze, the warm. Over and over again, the seasons were only distinguishable by the temperature and how much snow landed in the Amber Slavelands.<p>

Alvin the Treacherous had come for them almost a year after the chief and the rest of the tribe had perished at the hands of that terrible monster deep within the bowls of the dragon's nest. She remembered it clearly, as though it happened just yesterday. Standing on the docks, watching the warships come. The remaining Hooligans hadn't stood a chance, and when given the choice, she'd growled out that she'd rather be a slave than an Outcast.

She remembered how shocked and hurt she'd been when Ruffnut and Tuffnut had decided they'd rather chance the other way around, watching her best friend and her twin brother be shunted over to the rest of the 'new recruits' as Snotlout and Fishlegs, inspired by her tenacity and refusal, had joined her as slaves. The remaining

children were split, and all the while Hiccup had barely looked at them. He'd been in such a state since the ships had sailed off, never to return, that it was pathetically easy for Alvin to shackle him.

"\_I knew you were useless, I just never realized how much\_."

She'd said those words to him that day. She didn't know why, but she only knew she didn't see any reaction from him. Nothing could have pulled Hiccup out of whatever deep dark hole he'd buried himself in subconsciously. She didn't see him again, and she didn't know what had happened to him. As the years past, she found herself unable to care.

Soon, Alvin had the whole tribe moved from Outcast Island to the Amber Slavelands, where they spent days upon days out in the hot desert digging for any number of items. The Hooligans that had been with her when they'd first been captured had dwindled in number.

Astrid pulled back and wiped her brow with the back of her arm, feeling her chest heave as she fumbled with her other hand for the flask that contained her day's worth of drinking water, attached to the belt at her hip. Her clothes were the ragged clothing of a slave, the blue mark on her upper arm a clear statement of her status. She would never be free so long as she had that mark.

And then? Then the unimaginable happened.

A warm gust of wind gushed over her, shadow passing overhead. For a moment, she believed it was just cloud, but when she looked up, when the familiar sound of screeching ripped through the air, she stumbled back, falling into the sand behind her as a blood curling terror that had been instilled in her as a child raked through her veins.

They were vulnerable out here. They didn't have any weapons other than their digging tools.

They were going to die.

One by one, the Hooligans scattered, but then the strangest thing happened.

The dragons didn't attack.

Instead, they landed.

Snotlout and Fishlegs came over to her as the biggest one - a three headed dragon with shadow black scales and the biggest wingspan she'd ever seen - landed with a great thump, sending sand flying their way.

"Camicazi, I want you to get everyone that you can and \_leave\_. Take them somewhere safe. They're not slaves anymore, they're under the Company of the Dragonmark."

The voice was familiar but Astrid couldn't put a name to it, and for a moment she thought it was the shadow dragon that was talking. She looked to her left to see a tiny girl but someone who was no doubt her own age with wild, messy blonde hair and clothing that could only

be described as \_Bog\_ clothing on the back of a beautiful golden snake-like dragon. She - Camicazi - gave a salute and threw out a couple of instructions to some of the other dragons. Dragons Astrid belatedly realized had a rider on each of their backs.

The shadow dragon bowed, arching its back and a boy slid from the saddle across its shoulders.

The moment his feet touched the ground, Astrid felt her heart leap into her throat, along with a familiar annoyance that she hadn't felt since the later days of dragon training. He wore leather of some kind, kept together by dozens of buckles, a sword at his hip. Two braids sat at the back of messy auburn hair as they were pulled out from a helmet and he fixed the strands as much as he could, looking around. A Terrible Terror crawled up his back and onto his shoulders, a noise coming from it that made him look in their direction, sun shining on the blue dragon slavemark on the side of his forehead.

Astrid heard Fishlegs breathe out a name in her ear.

Hiccup.

Hiccup was alive.

Hiccup had come back for them.

The sun beat down on the Amber Slavelands, beginning to become filled with dragons, some with riders some without.

A new war was beginning, one that Alvin wouldn't be able to stop the drumbeat of.

End  
file.